

CALIFORNIA DROUGHT UPDATE

OCTOBER 31, 2022

Current Conditions

- The state's new water year began October 1, and with it came fresh concerns about a fourth year of extreme drought. The three-year period from 2020 to 2022 is now the driest on record going back to 1896.
- Hot and dry conditions are expected to continue through November, and the State is taking action to prepare for a fourth dry year.
- To replace and replenish the water that thirstier soils, vegetation, and the atmosphere will consume under hotter and drier conditions, Governor Newsom announced "California's Water Supply Strategy, Adapting to a Hotter, Drier Future" with actions to recycle, de-salt and conserve more water and expand water storage capacity.
- All of California's 58 counties are under a drought emergency proclamation. Californians are being asked to reduce their water use by 15 percent over 2020 levels to protect water reserves and help maintain critical flows for fish and wildlife wherever possible.
- As of October 31, the state's voluntary household dry well reporting system received reports of 94 dry wells in the past 30 days. Most are in the San Joaquin and Sacramento valleys.

The California Drought Update is a weekly roundup of conditions, state actions and upcoming developments. It is produced by an interagency team that includes the California Natural Resources Agency, the California Environmental Protection Agency, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the California Department of Food and Agriculture, the Department of Water Resources, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Resources Control Board and the Department of Public Health. For the latest on drought, please visit <https://drought.ca.gov>. For tips and resources for conserving water, please visit www.saveourwater.com.

Recent Events and State Actions

Pure Water San Diego tour and press event: The Secretary for Natural Resources joined San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria and other local officials on **November 1** for a tour and media availability highlighting the Pure Water San Diego project. The phased, multi-year recycling project will provide nearly half of San Diego's water supply by the end of 2035 and has received state and federal funding.



Lowering of Delta drought barrier begins: On **November 1**, DWR began construction to remove the emergency drought barrier in place across the West False River in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. DWR intends to fully remove the barrier by November 30, consistent with existing permit conditions. A press release will be issued.



DWR hosted a webinar for county drought plan requirements: DWR held the third of four webinars on **November 1** informing and soliciting input from stakeholders on the development of a guidebook to support the preparation of County Drought Plans, which focused on state small water systems and domestic wells as required by SB 552 of 2021.

Board of Food and Agriculture discussed groundwater, drought: When it met on **November 1**, the Board of Food and Agriculture focused on groundwater issues and included an update on UC Merced's drought impact report on the agricultural sector. DWR updated the Board on local groundwater sustainability agency actions.

Save Our Water at Dia de las Muertos in Los Angeles (October 29): The Save Our Water team continued outreach in local communities and shared water conservation messaging at a Dia de las Muertos event at the Forever Hollywood Cemetery in Los Angeles.



Reclamation announces step toward revising Colorado River operations (October 28): The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which operates Lake Mead and Lake Powell reservoirs on the Colorado River, announced it is initiating an expedited, supplemental process to revise the current interim operating guidelines for the operation of the reservoirs in 2023 and 2024. Reclamation officials said they continue to urge the seven states that depend upon the Colorado River to find agreement among themselves on how to cut water use in order to preserve at least two million acre-feet of water in the reservoirs to avoid levels that are too low to allow generation of power or distribution of water. But by publishing a Notice of Intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, Reclamation made clear that it is prepared to unilaterally revise the operating guidelines to protect the Colorado River System and stabilize rapidly declining reservoir storage elevations.

Recent Events and State Actions

Water use efficiency standard recommendations delivered (October 28): DWR delivered recommendations to the State Water Board on urban water use efficiency standards, as required by the 2108 “conservation as a way of life” laws. The report delivered to the Water Board details DWR’s studies and investigations, analysis of data, and development of the recommendations, guidelines, and methodologies for urban water suppliers for calculating the annual water use objective. The State Water Board will take DWR’s recommendations into account in adopting new urban water use efficiency standards for water suppliers.

Curtailments adjustments (ongoing): The State Water Board continues to monitor six critical watersheds where worsening conditions may threaten water supplies. Curtailments remain in effect in the Delta watershed, Russian River watershed, and the Scott River and Shasta River watersheds, and Mill Creek and Deer Creek watersheds (sub-watersheds of the Delta). Board staff will continue to adjust curtailment orders as conditions change. Water right holders should closely monitor their email and the watershed drought webpages for curtailment updates.



Tribal / Local Actions

- **Tribal governments:** Tribal emergency drought proclamations as reported by Cal OES to date: Buena Vista Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians, Karuk Tribe, Resighini Rancheria, Tule River Indian Tribe, Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, Yurok Tribe, Wiyot Tribe.
- **Local government:** Local emergency drought proclamations as reported by Cal OES to date: Butte, Colusa, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Lake, Madera, Marin, Mendocino, Modoc, Napa, Nevada, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Siskiyou, Sonoma, Tulare, Tuolumne, Yolo.

Key Data Points and Resources

- Daily Hydrological & Climate Information summary: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=DLYHYDRO>
- Statewide water conditions: http://cdec.water.ca.gov/water_cond.html
- Daily Reservoir Storage Summary: <https://cdec.water.ca.gov/reservoir.html>
- Water Year Forecast and Monthly Distribution: <http://cdec.water.ca.gov/reportapp/javareports?name=B120DIST>
- Monthly water supplier reports on water production and conservation: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/conservation_portal/conservation_reporting.html
- Latest groundwater conditions and information: <https://sgma.water.ca.gov/CalGWLIVE/>
- Information on state drought actions and assistance: <https://drought.ca.gov/>
- Conservation tips and resources for consumers: <https://saveourwater.com/>